

THE WHITE HOUSE
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By KDH NARA, Date 2/23/95

MEMORANDUM OF CONVERSATION

PARTICIPANTS: President Ford
Honorable Daniel Patrick Moynihan,
U. S. Representative to the United Nations
Lt. General Brent Scowcroft, Deputy
Assistant to the President for National
Security Affairs

DATE AND TIME: Wednesday, August 27, 1975
2:00 p.m.

PLACE: The Oval Office
The White House

[Press in for brief photo-taking session, during which there was a general discussion about the UN speech. The press left.]

President: I have this practice of having new Cabinet officers in after a month or so to see how they like the job, what the problems are, extras, etc. I read your paper last night on how bilateral ambassadors can help in multilateral organizations. In Congress, with the new electronic tally, we keep a scorecard on how people vote. Your paper strikes me as a device which could be employed. State should keep a tally on how individual countries vote.

Moynihan: The payroll is computerized, but there is no way to find out how Japan voted in the UN over the past 30 years except manually.

President: State should do something like that.

Moynihan: You will be presiding through a more difficult time than your predecessor. It will be a world where more and more don't like us. I think this does not result from specific actions, but has been in process for 50 years. Early in the 20th Century, America -- and the world -- saw American institutions as those toward which the world was heading.

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This feeling peaked out in 1919, when Wilson had enormous world prestige. At that time came the Soviet Communist government, and it before too long was viewed as the wave of the future. Then, after World War II, there was a third manifestation -- the new socialist tradition of the emerging Third World. This bunch is anti-American, just by nature.

The success of Soviet arms in the world is tending the world against the western democracies. We get beat.

For the last decade and for the next generation, the U.S. will be a beleaguered garrison in international forums. This is a fact. It will have consequences; we will look like losers. We will lose the Korean UN forces vote. The Third World finds it can impose things by bloc voting in multilateral forums.

There is much talk about U.S. companies influencing and controlling foreign governments. Nonsense! But we will find U.S. companies trying to influence the U.S. government on behalf of foreign governments.

How do nonaligned vote on Law of the Seas, nuclear energy, etc? Most of the votes go against us. How could we do better?

We don't know how to translate multilateral issues into bilateral issues. State is endemically bilaterally oriented. So there are countries which are sworn enemies in multilateral forums and who are still beneficiaries of enormous U.S. favors.

Cuba tries to clobber us on Puerto Rico in the UN. We beat it down in the UN and next day we lift the embargo on Cuba. One hand knows not what the other is doing. What do we do about all this? Maybe for certain countries we should say our multilateral relations are more important than our bilateral ones. We in the Mission made up a list and eliminated those with whom we had substantial trade, investment, etc. That left us with 74 countries. Some of these were important to us for other reasons, leaving a net of 64 -- one-half of the world. In those countries, the multilateral relations are most important.

We must start being harder on the weak than the strong. We must play hard ball.

That is my story.

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President: How soon can we start?

Moynihan: In a month if you want to.

The Foreign Service is a first-rate bunch. They will do what they are told, but they have never been told.

President: This fits into my philosophy. Kissinger hasn't talked to me about it.

Moynihan: He read my paper just before he left. I am sure he will want to discuss it with you.

President: I am attracted to the idea. [To General Scowcroft]: Make sure I discuss it with Kissinger. I know this system worked in the Congress. I like the idea.

Moynihan: These countries need us. We feed a lot of them.

President: How are your people?

Moynihan: I have first-rate people: for example, Ambassador Sherer, Len Garment. Tap Bennett is great.

President: The Congress?

Moynihan: Fraser and Burke.

President: Burke is an old duck. Fraser is way out, but I think he may be coming round a bit.

Moynihan: There is nothing like exposure to others pissing on your country. It should help him along.

Anything special you are concerned about? That are your special problems?

President: No, but if anything develops, you will hear about them. We will support you.

Moynihan: The only thing I ask is to see you from time to time. Contact with the President is what counts.

President: You can drop in with Kissinger after Cabinet meetings from time to time.